



The Broken Pencil Case

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

The Broken Pencil Case

Dovid loves his friend Binyomin's pencil case. It is dark green with a silver zipper, and it has a secret pocket for erasers. Binyomin's uncle has brought it all the way from Eretz Yisroel.

"You can look at it," Binyomin says at recess on Monday. "But be careful. It's my favorite thing."

Dovid holds it in both hands. He runs his finger over the stitching. He opens the zipper and closes it. He opens it and closes it again.

Then Yossi runs by shouting, "Race you to the swings!"

Dovid forgets he is holding the pencil case. He jumps up to chase Yossi, and the case flies out of his hand. It hits the pavement with a loud crack and slides under the bench.

Dovid's heart drops to his shoes.

He crawls under the bench and picks it up. The zipper has popped off one side. A long crack runs across the corner. The little silver pull has snapped in half.

Dovid looks around. Binyomin is across the yard, laughing with the other boys. No one has seen.

He stuffs the pencil case into his own backpack. His face feels hot. A voice in his head says, Put it back where it is. Say you don't know. Say it is already like that.

He walks to the line and stands very still. His stomach hurts.

When recess ends, Binyomin runs up. "Can I have my pencil case?"

"Um," says Dovid. His mouth feels like cotton. "I... I put it somewhere. I'll give it back later."

Binyomin frowns, but he nods and goes inside.

All through math, Dovid can't think. All through reading, he can't think either. The pencil case seems to sit in his backpack like a heavy rock. Every time he looks at it, his stomach twists.

At dismissal, Dovid walks slowly to the end of the hallway. He sees Binyomin at his cubby, looking all around, still searching.

Dovid takes a deep breath. In his mind he hears Rebbi's words from the week before: "A mistake isn't the worst thing. Hiding a mistake makes it grow."

His legs feel shaky. But he walks over.

"Binyomin," he says. "I have your pencil case. I broke it."

Binyomin turns. "What?"

Dovid takes the pencil case out and holds it with both hands. "I was running, and it fell. The zipper came off and it's cracked. I'm sorry. I should have told you right away. Instead, I hid it, and that was wrong too."

For a moment, Binyomin doesn't say anything. His eyes are wide. He looks at the zipper, then at the crack.

"That's my favorite thing," he says, quietly.

"I know," says Dovid. His eyes sting. "I feel awful. I want to fix it. I can use my allowance to buy a new zipper, or ask my Totty if he can sew it. I don't

want you to be without it."

Binyomin is quiet again. Then he says, "I'm really upset. But thank you for telling me the truth. I'd have been more upset if I found out later."

"I'm really sorry," says Dovid.

Binyomin lets out a long breath. "Okay. Maybe my Totty can fix it with you. He has a tool box."

The next day, they bring the pencil case to Binyomin's father. He smiles and says, "A zipper pull is easy to replace. Dovid, would you like to help?"

Dovid holds the case steady while Binyomin's father fits a new silver pull. The crack is still there, a thin line across the corner, but the zipper works.

"It isn't exactly the same," says Binyomin.

"No," says Dovid. "But it works, and I told you the truth."

Binyomin grins. "That counts for a lot."

That night Dovid sleeps better than he has in two days. Before he turns off the light, he zips his own pencil case shut, slowly, and sets it down on the desk where it can't fall.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What color is Binyomin's pencil case?

2. What happens to the pencil case at recess?

3. What does Dovid do first after it breaks?

4. How does Dovid make things right?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. The pencil case comes from Eretz Yisroel. Fact / Guess
2. Binyomin is upset but thanks Dovid for the truth. Fact / Guess
3. Dovid breaks the case on purpose. Fact / Guess
4. Binyomin's father helps fix the zipper. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. Why does the pencil case feel like a heavy rock in Dovid's backpack?

2. What makes it hard to tell the truth after a mistake?

3. What are the parts of a good apology?



Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: PENCIL, ZIPPER, SORRY, TRUTH, RECESS, REPAIR

J	Z	J	V	L	C	U	K	W	M	R
H	I	F	H	P	E	N	C	I	L	P
I	P	C	T	R	S	J	A	J	T	Y
J	P	R	G	R	E	N	N	U	J	N
O	E	F	H	E	U	C	J	I	B	S
C	R	B	O	P	V	T	E	I	R	O
S	V	P	Y	A	K	E	H	S	W	R
G	C	N	G	I	V	V	O	I	S	R
F	L	N	T	R	K	V	S	G	K	Y
D	B	Y	H	I	T	U	H	D	K	F
J	O	A	B	L	Y	C	J	W	K	A



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. NELPIC = _____

2. ERZIPP = _____

3. TRUHT = _____

4. OYRRS = _____

5. CESRSE = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I made a mistake, and I want to tell you."

"I'm sorry. How can I fix it?"

"Thank you for listening to me."

Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Make It Right Chart

#	What happened	What I said	How I fixed it
Mistake 1			
Mistake 2			
Mistake 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw Dovid and Binyomin working together to fix the pencil case.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing Dovid and Binyomin working together to fix the pencil case.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. Dark green
2. It falls and cracks, and the zipper pull breaks
3. He hides it in his backpack
4. He tells the truth, says sorry, and helps fix it

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Fact; 3 Guess; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: PENCIL, ZIPPER, TRUTH, SORRY, RECESS

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.